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By HENRY A. CUTLER.

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THE RETURN.

"Three years! I wonder if she'll know me!
I limp a little and I left one arm
At Petersburg, and I am grown as brown
As the plump chestnuts on my little farm;
And I am as shaggy as the chestnut burrs,
But ripe and sweet within, and wholly hers.

The darling! how I long to see her!
My heart outruns this feeble soldier pace;
But I remember, after I had left,
A little Charlie came to take my place;
Ah! how the laughing three-year-old brown eyes
(His mother's eyes) will stare with pleased surprise!

Sure, they'll be at the corner watching!
I sent them word that I should come to-night;
The birds all knew it, for they crowded around,
Teetering their welcome with a wild delight;
And that old robin, with a halting wing,
I saved her life three years ago last spring.

Three years—perhaps I am but dreaming,
For, like the pilgrim of the long ago,
I've lugged a weary burden at my back,
Through summer's heat and winter's blinding snow,
Till now I reach my home, my darling's breast
Then I can roll my burden off—and rest."

* * * * * * * * *

When morning came, the early rising sun
Laid his light fingers on a soldier sleeping
Where a soft covering of bright green grass
Over two lowly mounds was lightly creeping,
But waked him not; his was the rest eternal,
Where the brown eyes reflected love supernal.

Anonymous.

The Marchioness and the Two Counts.

The marchioness was at her toilet. Florine and Aspasia, her two ladies'-maids, were busy powdering, as it were, with hoar frost, the bewitching widow.

She was a widow, this marchioness, a widow of twenty-three; and wealthy, as very few persons were any longer at the court of Louis XV., her godfather.

Three-and-twenty years earlier, his majesty had held her at the baptismal font of the chapel at Marly, and had settled upon her an income of four thousand pounds by way of proving to her father, the Baron Fontevrault, who had saved his life at the battle of Fontenoy, that kings can be grateful, whatever people choose to say to the contrary.

The marchioness, then, was a widow. She resided, during the summer, in a charming little chateau, situated half-way up the slope, overhanging the water, on the road from Bougival to St. Germain. The fine estate of the Countess Dubarry, the king's favorite mistress, adjoined hers; and on opening her eyes she could see, without rising, the white gable ends and the wide-spreading chestnut-trees of Luciennes, perched upon the heights. On this particular day—it was noon—the marchioness, whilst her attendants dressed her hair and arranged her headdress with the most exquisite taste, gravely employed herself in tossing up, alternately, a couple of fine oranges, which crossed each other in the air, and then dropped into the white and delicate hand that caught them in their fall.

This slight-of-hand—which the marchioness interrupted at times while she adjusted her beauty-spot on her lip, or cast an impatient glance on the crystal clock that told her how time was running away with the fair widow's precious moments—had lasted for ten minutes, when the folding doors were thrown open, and a valet, such as one sees now only on the stage, announced with pompous voice —"The King!"

Apparently the marchioness was accustomed to such visits; for she but half rose from her seat, as she saluted with her most gracious smile the personage who entered.

It was indeed Louis XV. himself—Louis XV. at sixty-five; but robust, upright, with smiling lip and beaming eye, and jauntily clad in a close-fitting, pearl-gray hunting suit, that became him to perfection. He carried under his arm a handsome fowling-piece, inlaid with mother-of-pearl; a small pouch, intended for ammunition alone hung over his shoulder.

The king had come from Luciennes, almost alone—that is to say, with a captain of the guard, the old Marshal de Richelieu, and a single equerry on foot. He had been amusing himself with quail-shooting; but a shower of hail had surprised him, and his majesty had no relish for it.

Fortunately, he was but a few steps from the gateway of the chateau when the shower commenced. He had come therefore to take shelter with his god-daughter, having dismissed his suite, and only keeping with him a magnificent pointer.

"Good morning, marchioness," said the king, as he entered, putting down his fowling-piece in a corner. "I have come to ask your hospitality. We were caught in a shower, at your gate—Richelieu and I. I have packed off Richelieu. But don't put yourself out of the way, marchioness. Let Aspasia finish this becoming pile of your head-dress, and Florine spread out with her silver knife the scented powder that blends so well with the lilies and the roses of your bewitching face. Why, my dear marchioness, you're so pretty, one could eat you up!"

"You think me so, sire?"

"I tell you so every day. Oh, what fine oranges!"

And the king seated himself upon the roomy sofa, by the side of the marchioness, whose rosy finger-tips he kissed with an infinity of grace. Then taking up one of the oranges that he had admired, he proceeded leisurely to examine it.

"But," said he at length, "what are oranges doing by the side of your Chinese powder-box and your scent-bottles? Is there any connection between this fruit and the maintenance, easy as it is, marchioness, of your charms?"

"These oranges," replied the lady, gravely, "fulfilled just now, sire, the functions of destiny."

The king opened wide his eyes, and stroked the long ears of his dog, by way of giving the marchioness time to explain her meaning.

"It was the Countess who gave them to me," she continued.

"Madame Dubarry?"

"Exactly so, sire."

"A trumpery gift, it seems to me, marchioness.

"I hold it, on the contrary, to be an important one; since I repeat to your majesty, that these oranges decide my fate."

"I give it up," said the king.

"Imagine, sire; yesterday I found the countess occupied in tossing her oranges up and down, in this way;" and the marchioness recommenced her game with a skill that cannot be described.

"I see," said the king; "she accompanied this singular amusement with the words, 'Up, Choiseul! up, Praslin!' and, on my word, I fancy how the pair jumped."

"Precisely so, sire."

"And do you dabble in politics, marchionesss? Have you a fancy for uniting with the countess, just to mortify my poor ministers?"

"By no means, sire; for, in place of Monsieur de Choiseul and the Duke de Praslin, I was saying to myself, just now, 'Up, Menneval! up, Beaugency!'"

"Ay, ay," returned the king; "and why the deuce would you have them jumping, those two good-looking noblemen—Menneval, who is a Cræsus, and Beaugency, who is a statesman, and dances the minuet to perfection."

"I'll tell you," said the lady. "You know, sire, that the Count de Menneval is an accomplished gentleman, a handsome man, a gallant cavalier, an indefatigable dancer, and longing for nothing so much as to live in the country, on his estate in Touraine, on the banks of the Loire, with the woman whom he loves or will love, far from the court, from grandeur, and from turmoil. Nor are you unaware, sire, that Count de Beaugency is one of the most brilliant courtiers of Versailles; ambitious, burning with zeal for the service of your majesty, and capable of going to the end of the earth—with the title of Embassador of the King of France."

"I know that," chimed in Louis XV. with a laugh. "But, alas! I have more embassadors than embassies. My ante-chambers overflow every morning."

"Now," continued the marchioness, "I have been a widow these two years past."

"A long time, there's no denying."

"Ah!" sighed she, "there's no need to tell me so, sire. But Count de Menneval loves me—at least, he says so, and I am easily presuaded."

"Very well; then marry Count de Manneval."

"I have thought of it, sire; and, in truth, I might do much worse. I should like well enough to live in the country, under the willow trees, on the borders of the river, with a husband, fond, yielding, loving! But," added the lady, "Count de Beaugency loves me equally well.',

"Ah! ha! the ambitious man!"

"Ambition does not shut out love, sire. Count de Beaugency is twenty-five; he is ambitious. I should like a husband vastly who was longing to reach high offices of State. Greatness has its own particular merit."

"Then marry Count de Beaugency."

"I have thought of that, also; but this poor Count de Menneval—"

"Very good," exclaimed the king, laughing. "Now I see to what purpose the oranges are destined. Menneval pleases you; Beaugency would suit you just as well; and since one can't have more than one husband, you make them each jump in turn."

"Just so, sire. But observe what happens."

"Ah, what does happen!"

"That, unwilling and unable to play unfairly, I take equal pains to catch the two oranges as they come down; and that I catch them both, each time."

"Well, are you willing that I should take part in your game?"

You, sire? Ah, what a joke that would be!"

"I am very clumsy, marchioness. To a certainty, in less than three minutes Beaugency and Menneval will be rolling on the floor."

"Ah!" exclaimed the lady; "and if you have any preference for one or the other?"

"No; we'll do better. Look, I take the oranges—you mark them carefully; or, better still, you stick into one of them one of these toilet pins, making up your own mind which of the two is to represent Beaugency, and leaving me on that point entirely in the dark. If Beaugency touch the floor, you shall marry his rival; if it happens just other otherwise, you shall resign yourself to become an embassadress."

"Excellent! Now, sire, let's see the result."

The king took the two oranges and played shuttle with them above his head. But, at the third pass, the two rolled down upon the embroidered carpet, and the marchioness broke out into a merry fit of laughter.

"I foresaw as much," exclaimed his majesty. "What a clumsy fellow I am!"

"And we more puzzled than ever, sire!"

"So we are, marchioness; but the best thing we can do is to slice the oranges, sugar them well, and season them with a dash of rum."

"And Count de Menneval? and Count de Beaugency?" said the marchioness, in piteous accents. "How is the question to be settled?"

Louis XV. began to cogitate.

"Are you quite sure," said he "that both of them are in love with you?"

"Probably so," returned she, with a little coquettish smile sent back to her from the mirror opposite.

"And their love equally strong?"

"I trust so, sire."

"And I don't believe a word of it."

"Ah!" said the marchioness, "but that is, in truth a most terrible supposition. Besides, sire, they are on their way hither."

"Both of them?"

"One after the other: Beaugency at one o'clock precisely; Menneval at two. I promised them my decision to-morrow, on condition that they would pay me a final visit to-day."

As the marchioness finished, the valet, who had announced the king, came to inform his mistress that that Count de Beaugency was in the drawing-room, and solicited the favor of admission to pay his respects.

"Capital!" said Louis XV. smiling as though he were eighteen; "show Count de Beaugency in. Marchioness you will receive him, and tell him the price that you set upon your hand."

"And what is this price, sire?"

"You must give him the choice, either to renounce you, or to consent to send in to me his resignation of his appointments, in order that he may go and bury himself with his wife on his estate of Courlac, in Poitou, there to live the life of a country nobleman."

"And then, sire?"

"You will allow him a couple of hours of reflection, and so dismiss him."

"And in the end?"

"The rest is my concern."

And the king got up, taking his dog and his gun, and concealed himself behind a screen, drawing also a curtain, that he might be completely hidden.

"What is your intention, sire?" asked the marchioness.

"I conceal myself, like the kings of Persia, from the eyes of my subjects," replied Louis XV. "Hush! marchioness."

A few moments later and the Count de Beaugency entered the room.

The count was a charming cavalier; tall, slight, with a moustache black and curling upwards, an eye sparkling and intelligent, a Roman nose, an Austrian lip, a firm step, a noble and imposing presence.

The marchioness blushed slightly at the sight of him, but offered him her hand to kiss, and begged him by a gesture to be seated.

"Marchioness," said Beaugency, as he held in his hands the rosy fingers of the lovely widow, "It is fully a week since you received me!"

"A week? why, you were here yesterday!"

"Then I must have counted the hours for ages."

"A compliment which may be found in one of the younger Crebillon's books!"

"You are hard upon me, marchioness."

"Perhaps so; it comes naturally; I am tired."

"Ah, marchioness! Heaven knows that I would make of your existence one never ending fete!"

"That would at least be wearisome."

"Say a word, my lady, one single word, and my fortune, my future prospects, my ambition—"

"You are still, then, as ambitious as ever?"

"More than ever since I have been in love with you."

"Is that necessary?"

"Beyond a doubt. Ambition—what is it but honors, wealth, the envious look of impotent rivals, the admiration of the crowd, the favor of monarchs? And is not one's love unanswerably and most triumphantly proved, in laying all this at the feet of the woman one adores?"

"You may be right."

"I may be right, marchioness! Listen to me, my fair ladylove."

"I am all attention, my lord."

"Between us, who are well born, and consort not with plebians, that vulgar and sentimental sort of love which is painted by those who write books for your mantuamakers and chambermaids, would be in exceedingly bad taste. It would be but slighting love and making no account of its enjoyment, were we to go and bury it in some obscure corner of the provinces, or if Paris—we, who belong to Versailles—living away there with it, in monotonous solitude and unchanging contemplation!"

"Ah!" said the marchioness, "you think so?"

"Tell me, rather, of fetes that dazzle one with lights, with noise, with smiles, with wit, through which one glides intoxicated, with the fair conquest in triumph on one's arm. Why hide one's happiness, in place of parading it? The jealousy of the world does but increase, and cannot diminish it. My uncle, the cardinal, stands well at court. He has the king's ear, and will, ere long, procure me one of the northern embassies. Cannot you fancy yourself madame the Embassadress, treading on the platform of a drawing-room, as royalty with royalty, with the highest nobility of a kingdom—having the men at your feet, and the women on lower seats around you, whilst you yourself are occupant of a throne, and wield a sceptre."

And as Count de Beaugency warmed with his own eloquence, he gently slid from his seat to the knees of the marchioness, whose hand he covered with kisses.

She listened to him, with a smile on her lips, and then abruptly said to him, "Rise, my lord, and hear me in turn. Are you in truth sincerely attached to me?"

"With my soul, marchioness!"

"Are you prepared to make every sacrifice?"

"Every one, my lady."

"That is fortunate indeed; for to be prepared for all, is to accomplish one, without the slightest difficulty; and it is but a single one that I require."

"Oh, speak! Must a throne be conquered?"

"By no means. You must only call to mind that you own a fine chateau in Poitou."

"Pooh!" said Beaugency; "a shed."

"Every man's house is his castle," replied the widow; "and having called it to mind, you need only order post-horses."

"For what purpose?"

"To carry me to Courlac. It is there that your almoner shall unite us, in the chapel, in the presence of your domestics and your vassals, our only witnesses."

"A singular whim, marchioness; but I submit to it."

"Very well. We will set out this evening. Ah! I forgot."

"What, further?"

"Before starting you will send in your resignation to the king."

Count de Beaugency almost bounded from his seat.

"Do you dream of that, marchioness?"

"Assuredly. You will not at Courlac be able to perform your duties at court."

"And on returning?"

"We will not return."

"We will—not—return!" slowly ejaculated Count de Beaugency. "Where then shall we proceed?"

"Nowhere. We will remain at Courlac."

"All the summer?"

"And all the winter. I count upon settling myself there, after our marriage. I have a horror of the court. I do not like the turmoil. Grandeur wearies me. I look forward only to a simple and charming country life—to the tranquil and happy existence of the forgotten lady of the castle. What matters it to you? You are ambitious for my love's sake. I care but little for ambition; you ought to care for it still less, since you are in love with me."

"But, marchioness—"

"Hush! it's a bargain. Still, for form's sake, I give you one hour to reflect. There, pass out that way; go into the winter drawing-room that you will find at the end of the gallery, and send me your answer upon a leaf of your tablets. I am about to complete my toilet, which I left unfinished to receive you."

And the marchioness opened a door, bowed Beaugency into the corridor, and closed the door upon him.

"Marchioness," cried the king, from his hiding-place and through the screen, "you will offer the Count de Menneval the embassy of Prussia, which I promise you for him."

"And you will not emerge from your retreat?"

"Certainly not! It is far more amusing to remain behind the scenes. One hears all, laughs at one's ease, and is not troubled with saying anything."

It struck two. Count de Menneval was announced. His majesty remained snug, and shammed dead.

Count de Menneval was at all points a cavalier who yielded nothing to his rival, Count de Beaugency. He was fair. He had a blue eye, a broad forehead, a mouth that wore a dreamy expression, and that somewhat pensive air which became so well the troubadours of France in the olden time.

He was timid, but he passionately loved the beautiful widow; and his dearest dream was of passing his whole life at her feet, in well-chosen retirement, far from those envious lookers-on, who are ever ready to fling their sarcasms on quiet happiness, and who dissemble their envy under a cloak of philosophic scepticism.

He trembled as he entered the marchioness's boudoir. He remained standing before her, and blushed as he kissed her hand. At length, encouraged by a smile, emboldened by the solemnity of this coveted interview, he spoke to her of his love, with a poetic simplicity and an unpremeditated warmth of heart—the genuine enthusiasm of a priest, who has faith in the object of his adoration.

As he spoke, the marchioness sighed, and said within herself, "He is right. Love is happiness. Love is to be two indeed, but one at the same time; and free from those importunate intermeddlers, the indifference or the mocking attention of the world."

She remembered, however, the advice of the king, and thus addressed the count:

"What will you indeed do, my lord, in order to convince me of your affections?"

"All that man can do."

The count was less bold than Beaugency, who had talked of conquering a throne. He was probably more sincere.

"I am ambitious," said the widow.

"Ah!" replied Count de Menneval, sorrowfully.

"And I would that the man whom I marry should aspire to everything, and achieve everything."

"I will try so to do, if you wish it."

"Listen; I give you an hour to reflect. I am, you know, the king's god-daughter. I have begged of him an embassy for you."

"Ah!" said Count de Menneval, with indifference.

"He has granted my request. If you love me, you will accept the offer. We will be married this evening, and your excellency the embassador to Prussia will set off for Berlin immediately after the nuptials. Reflect; I grant you an hour."

"It is useless," answered Count de Menneval; "I have no need of reflection, for I love you. Your wishes are my orders; to obey you is my sole desire. I accept the embassy."

"Never mind," said she, trembling with joy and blushing deeply. "Pass into the room, wherein you were just now waiting. I must complete my toilet, and then I shall be at your service. I will summon you."

The marchioness handed out the second count by the right-hand door, as she had handed out the first by the left; and then said to herself, "I shall be prettily embarrassed if Count de Beaugency should consent to end his days at Courlac!"

Thereupon the king removed the screen and reappeared.

His majesty stepped quietly to the round table whereon he had replaced the oranges, and took up one of them.

"Ah!" exclaimed the marchioness, "I perceive, sire, that you foresee the difficulty that is about to spring up, and go back to the oranges, in order to settle it."

As his sole reply, Louis XV. took a small ivory-handled pen-knife from his waistcoat pocket, made an incision in the rind of the orange, peeled it off very neatly, divided the fruit into two parts, and offered one to the astonished marchioness.

"But, sire, what are you doing?" was her eager inquiry.

"You see that I am eating the orange."

"But—"

"It was of no manner of use to us."

"You have decided then?"

"Unquestionably. Count de Menneval loves you better than Count de Beaugency."

"That is not quite certain yet; let us wait."

"Look," said the king, pointing to the valet who entered with a note from Beaugency. "You'll soon see."

The widow opened the note, and read:

"MADAM—I love you—heaven is my witness; and to give you up is the most cruel of sacrifices. But I am a nobleman. A nobleman belongs to the king. My life, my blood are his. I cannot, without forfeit of my loyalty, abandon his service—"

"Et cetera," chimed in the king, "as was observed by the Abbe Fleury, my tutor. Marchioness, call in Count de Menneval."

Count de Menneval entered, and was greatly troubled to see the king in the widow's boudoir.

"Count," said his majesty, "Lord de Beaugency was deeply in love with the marchioness; but he was more deeply still in love—since he would not renounce it to please her—with the embassy to Prussia. And you, you love the marchioness much better than you love me, since you would only enter my service for her sake. This leads me to believe that you would be but a lukewarm public servant, and that Count de Beaugency will make an excellent Embassador. He will start for Berlin this evening; and you shall marry the marchioness. I will be present at the ceremony."

"Marchioness," whispered Louis XV. in the ear of his god-daughter, "true love is that which does not shrink from a sacrifice."

And the king peeled the second orange and ate it, as he placed the hand of the widow in that of De Menneval.

Then he added: "I have been making three persons happy; the marchioness, whose indecision I have relieved; the Count de Menneval, who shall marry her; and Count de Beaugency, who will perhaps perchance prove a sorry Embassador. In all this, I have only neglected my own interests, for I have been eating the oranges without sugar—and yet they pretend to say I am a selfish monarch!"

BASHFULNESS.—No mental emotion is more painful than bashfulness. Without being guilty, its subject feels crushed. The temperament or complexion most liable to suffer from bashfulness is the blonde. We know that such persons blush more readily; if frightened, they turn pale more quickly and are more likely to faint under the influence of pain and alarm than others. There is, in this temperament, an anterior cause for embarrassment and timidity. The circulation is more capricious, and the subjects are more liable to inflammatory disease. The anger of such persons is quick and hot. Under excitement, the heart beats unnaturally and the blood rushes to the brain, producing confusion of thoughts and strangely embarrassing the conduct.

The best guarantee against this is culture and familiarity with good society. This will familiarize us with what is expected of us, and doing what society claims of us will strengthen self-possession, and increase self-esteem. Persons troubled with bashfulness should, also, avoid the physical conditions calculated to produce a disturbed circulation of the blood.—*American Phrenological Journal.*

—A parsimonious sea captain, answering the complaints of his men that the bread was bad, exclaimed: "What! complain of your bread that is made from flour! What do you think of the Apostles? They ate 'shew bread,' made from old boots and shoes."

BEES.—A swarm of bees in their natural state contains from 10,000 to 20,000 of the insects, whilst in hives they number from 30,000 to 40,000. In a square foot of honeycomb there are about 9000 cells; a queen bee lays her eggs for 50 or 60 consecutive days laying about 500 daily. It takes three days to hatch each egg. In one season a single queen bee hatches about 100,000 bees. It takes 5000 bees to weigh a pound.

ADVANTAGES OF CRYING.—A French physician is out in a long dissertation on the advantages of groaning and crying in general, especially during surgical operations. He contends that groaning and crying are two great means by which nature allays anguish; that those patients who give way to their natural feelings, more speedily recover from accidents and operations than those who suppose it unworthy for a man to betray such symptoms of cowardice as either to groan or to cry. He tells of a man who reduced his pulse from one hundred and twenty-six to sixty in the course of two hours by giving full vent to his emotions. If people are at all unhappy about any thing, let them go to their rooms and comfort themselves with a loud bohoo, and they will feel a hundred per cent, better afterwards.

In accordance with the above, the crying of children should not be too greatly discouraged. If it is systematically suppressed, the result may be St. Vitus' dance, epileptic fits, or some other disease of the nervous system. What is natural is nearly always useful, and nothing can be more natural than the crying of children, when anything occurs to give them either mental or physical pain.

Probably, most persons have experienced the effect of tears in relieving great sorrow. It is even curious how the feelings are allayed by their free indulgence in groans and sighs. Then let parents and friends show more indulgence to noisy bursts of grief on the part of children as well as of older persons, and regard the eyes and mouth as the safety-valves through which nature discharges her surplus steam.

AN INNOCENT OLD LADY.—A young lady went into a store in Webster, lately, selected her outfit, and gave orders for the articles to be sent to her. "Recollect," said she, to the accommodating clerk, "rats, mice, waterfall, net, crimpers, etc., etc." An unsophisticated elderly lady from the rural district, who witnessed the transaction, lifted her spectacles and gazed after the departing miss; then turning to the proprietor, in a tone of the sincerest pity: "Poor thing!" said she, "she's crazy, ai'nt she?" The smile at this was audible.

☞ The late Rev. Rowland Hill understand human nature well. His chapel having been infested by pickpockets, he took occasion to remind the congregation that there was an all-seeing Providence to whom all hearts were open, and from whom no secrets are hid: "but lest," he added, "there may be any present who are insensible to such reflections, I would also say that Bow street officers are on the lookout."

☞ If an acorn be suspended by a piece of thread to within half an inch of some water contained in a hyacinth glass, and so permitted to remain without being disturbed, it will in a few months burst and throw a root down into the water, and shoot upward its tapering stem, with beautiful little green leaves. A young oak tree growing in this way on a mantleshelf of a room, is a very interesting object.

LET IT ALONE, BOYS.—Let what alone? To drink that stuff in the drunkard's bowl! Aye, let it alone! Don't even learn how it tastes. As the serpent fascinates the bird only to destroy it, so strong drink charms at the first but kills at last. The first drop may charm you, therefore don't drink the first drop. If you wish to enjoy good health, if you value a pure character, if you want to be happy, and make others happy, if you wish to go to Heaven, avoid strong drinks. Beware of the first drop!

See yonder youth with irons on his hands and feet. He is in prison. Another youth, with weeping eyes, is bidding him farewell. It is a sad farewell for the prisoner is about to be led out to die. He is a murderer The law is about to take his life. What does he say? These are his words: "Remember what I told you—let the liquor alone!"

Good reason had he for giving his counsel—Liquor had brought him to a felon's doom. Let the boys, aye, and the girls too, heed his words.—*Let the Liquor alone.*